

February 24, 1975

criminal. I can't understand why we haven't had tremendous numbers of people fired. I don't know how you can administer a program like this and I am talking about from the school districts up to the Board of Education, all the way through state government and nobody lose their job over it. You talk about enforcing the law and following the law and nobody followed the law of 403. I doubt if many people even read it but if Senator Marvel wants to continue a witch hunt and that is his solution and let the program evaporate in the meantime and start all over, that's one solution. Another solution is Senator Lewis'. It is to get the money out that we promised to get out to provide the program and there is no question that we have to go back and shore up the administration and get this thing administered in the manner it should have been administered originally and to find those people who were derelict and apply the pressure necessary to have them lose their jobs, if they are not capable of fulfilling the responsibilities that this Legislature proposes for them, but I don't see any benefit here to debating those issues now. Either we want the program to continue or we all lied to our constituents last year and we would much prefer the relishment of a witch hunt. Now I think we have to find the responsibility and assess it and get the program on a sound administrative basis but we also have to get the money out so that the program continues in the meantime and that is what Senator Lewis is talking about. I move that the...I hope that the bill be advanced.

PRESIDENT: Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I would just like to ask Mr. Lewis two or three questions for informational purposes, if I may. First of all, you say this is a four week program. Then after four weeks, what happens? Next, if we have this two million dollars turned loose for the payment of December 31st and the June 31st, what guarantee do we have that the payment for September 30th or whatever date it is that the next payment comes due will be made? And my last question is this. We are apparently penalizing the school districts and the entities that are providing this service that are flying right and on the other hand, those who are not doing it correctly, we're withholding the funds. It seems like we are kind of torn betwixt and between here as to what we should do with those who are flying right and those that aren't? If the situation is that we are just biding time here for a little bit so that the Board of Education can get their house in order, what guarantee do we have that this will be done?

SENATOR LEWIS: Let me try to answer those in a systematic way and I will try to be brief and I know that you will appreciate that. First, the two million dollars is simply to guarantee that services will continue. A number of services are going to terminate at the first of March, as I understand it. For instance in the southeast area is one. I think that there has been commitments made to...to reduce the staff and to make sure that they are not overcommitted on staff for next year if they are not going to get the money. This period of time is to provide an orderly transition of cash flow from the state to the local district. The two million dollars we are going to appropriate now will take care of what we should have done, primarily, in the